

## DINNER ON THE GRIP

By A. WALLIE

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Captain Alexander Mather of the steam coaster Grip was hurrying along Cardiff street dockward to his vessel when he was accosted by a young man smartly attired in yachting costume.

"Captain Mather?" the stranger querie

"That's me," the sailor retorted gruffly enough, having all the distaste of his class toward the average amateur seaman.

"You were pointed out to me as master of a boat just leaving for Southampton. I want to go there at once."

The hint was obvious enough, but Mather did not choose to follow it up. "Take the train, then," he replied. "Passengers ain't in my line."

"So I would" — the young man appeared disposed to be persistent — "but I have a lot of heavy baggage here, and I wish it to accompany me to my yacht, which is lying off Cowes. If you'll take it and me I'll make it well worth your while."

The captain hesitated. The Grip possessed small accommodation for outsiders, but a job like this might mean something in the skipper's pocket.

"Well," he said, surveying the stranger over again, "my ship ain't a liner, you know, but just a coastin' tramp covered this blessed minute with coal muck that won't come off her till she starts washin' herself outside Lundy."

His new acquaintance seemed in no way dismayed at this description. "That will be all right, captain," he returned. "Come in here a minute and let us talk it over."

The place thus indicated was an adjacent bar, where over suitable drinks the yachtsman continued negotiations.

"There are about a dozen large wooden cases," he went on, "with furnishings and my own outfit for a long West Indian cruise. I should have sent them on ahead of me but for some stupid delay, and now if I lose sight of them heaven knows how long I may be kept waiting for them."

"What's your yacht's name?" demanded Mather.

The stranger took out his cardcase. "You are a bit suspicious," he said pleasantly enough, "but we'll have everything fair and square." He handed over a card as he spoke, and on it the sailor read: "E. V. RENTORE, S. Y. Sea Swift R. Z. Y. C."

The first names were unknown to Mather, but the last four cryptic letters he was aware represented the title of one of the most exclusive clubs in the kingdom.

"Then, sir," he said with an obvious change of manner, "if you want me to take your things it will have to be arranged quickly. I'll be haulin' out for sea in a couple of hours. If they are not too heavy and you have them alongside within that time I might manage."

"My man shall have the cases down within the time you say; they are not heavy, and your own crane will easily swing them on board. And as to terms — will \$25 suit you?"

The sailor gasped. He had not expected nearly so much.

"If you'll throw in the price of a new hat for myself, sir," he responded quickly, "we'll call it a deal."

"Good!" Rentore produced his purse. "Here's half of it now, and a couple of sovereigns for yourself."

Thus the bargain was sealed, and the sailor, much elated at his fortune, cast his way down to the Grip. He had not been long there when a wagon pulled up, bearing the cases and equipment, a man of the valet type.

"It's the stuff," the latter grumbled, "the skipper, hand what you're goin' to do with it in a court of law, I don't know. Is your

name leaved for him, scurfin'ly

for improvement, and the report

of owner, and the Collector,

directed to send out the bill of lading?"

The ordinance relating to the way

names was brought up for final passant

and was assailed by Mr. Moore as a useless piece of legislation and was laid on the table.

## A Puzzle to Police.

Detective Sergeant James Bell of East Orange, who has had a long experience in police and detective work, says that the police of the Oranges are up against the hardest proposition they ever struck in their efforts to capture the burglar who is known throughout the Oranges, Montclair and this town as the man with the small hand. This is the thief who gains entrance to houses by cutting a block from the door panels. His work, Detective Bell says, is the boldest and most deliberate of any犯 that the police have had experience with, and the singular and puzzling feature of it is that none of his plunder ever comes to light in the pawnshops, fences, or other places where thieves usually dispose of their goods. The man with the small hand has made extensive hauls in the Oranges, Glen Ridge, Montclair and this town, and in nearly every case his work shows evidence of daring and deliberateness. In several instances he has not failed to eat or drink some of the that he has found in cellars while engaged in plundering

houses. The way to save—stop paying rent, buy a home—subscribe for shares in the Bloomfield Building and Loan Association. New shares opened at par Monday. Start with us now.—Adv.

did the rest, so sit down and do him justice."

Captain Mather was sufficient of a philosopher to accept the gifts the gods thus sent. He sat down as requested, and if his handling of his knife and fork left something to be desired his appreciation of the meal was none the less patent. Moreover, his host saw to it that his glass was frequently replenished, so that as the cheese came on the table the skipper went under it.

"Perkins," ordered Rentore, "get the steward to help you to take Captain Mather to his room; he does not seem well. And—ah—you might have word sent to the bridge I'll be glad if the mate will join me here. The night's fine, and I expect the boatswain can take the ship past Lundy without sinking the island."

The passenger appeared to the steward, who was present, to be also slightly touched with an after dinner manner. The mate, when he came, had the same impression, but nevertheless that officer also collapsed, as his superior had done, leaving Rentore still quite composed. The chief engineer, who had joined the feast at the request of the giver of it, along with the mate, was simultaneously overcome.

"Most extraordinary," remarked Rentore. "Never saw men so easily upset. I'm going on deck. Perkins, you might see the steward gets out that case of whisky for the men forward and the stokers."

On deck the passenger lit a cigar, mounted to the bridge and joined the boatswain, who had charge of it.

"I've sent a bottle or two of hard stuff forward," he said to him affably. "You might go down and have your share. I'm sailor enough to watch her if you leave me the course."

"Thank 'ee kindly, sir," answered the seaman, who, like the rest of the crew, was blessing his stars for having given the Grip the carrying of such a benefactor. "Keep her sou'west by west, and she'll take no harm for the minute I'll be gone."

When the boatswain's cap had vanished down the ladder Rentore turned to the hand at the wheel.

"You shouldn't be out of this, my man," he said. "Off you go, and drink my health. I can keep her head straight."

He gripped the wheel, and the sailor saw the compass card kept steady to the course. Then he, too, disappeared, and silence reigned fore and aft along the decks of the Grip.

This lasted for perhaps half an hour —then Perkins appeared upon the bridge.

"They're gone under at last!" he said in tones very different from any he had previously used. "Shall I let our lads loose?"

"Yes," answered Rentore. "Tell some of them to see quickly to the fires—I can feel the old tub's speed slackening. And send a hand here to relieve me."

Perkins descended to where the cases were ranged and tapped on each. They opened as he did so, and dim figures from them darted swiftly to his bidding. The Grip had got a fresh crew.

Next morning, just before daylight, a small coasting steamer crept into the anchorage of St. Mary's, Selly, and brought up close alongside the palatial yacht Bocanera, belonging to a multi-millionaire of American extraction. It had been lying there for some days while its owner explored the islands in accordance with intentions previously announced somewhat widely in the public prints.

The Bocanera was visited by a boatful of armed men from the new arrival. The anchor watch on her deck was overpowered, the remainder of her crew battened down, and the millionaire was robbed under threat of violence of every portable article of value he had with him, including a large sum of gold and his wife's jewels, reputedly of fabulous worth.

Word of this daring robbery reached the shore, but by that time the stranger had utterly vanished beyond sight.

During the night following the Grip reached Southampton and was berthed ready to commence discharge next morning. Not even the police on duty noticed that her crew all slipped ashore one by one during the darkness. It was the jumpers, coming down to commence work on the cargo, who found the place deserted. They explored the forecastle last, and from below it came a muffled barking. Hailing the hatch leading into the fore peak, there emerged from that literally black hole a string of disconsolate figures. Captain Mather bringing up the rear in crestfallen fashion.

"Here!" he demanded, rubbing his eyes, "where in blazes are we?"

"Southampton," in course, he was told, "the ship's been lost?" he added to brokenly. "I know no more than a outsider. I'd best see the police. If they'll catch me that yachtsman'll be hangin' him for them myself."

A sentinel in which the multi-

millionaire fully concurred.

—The Origin of Woolwich Arsenal.

Woolwich arsenal is said to owe its detection to an explosion. According to the story the surveyor general gave

that some old French guns, cap-

canes the Duke of Marlborough.

The Oranges recent English gun at

way has passed. A young Swiss student,

singer from Zurich, who was traveling in

trolley car, scientific knowledge, happen-

grumbling on

the molten metal were

during the rush

spoke to the authorities

left places

but the metal was run.

Motormen say the

creation of steam in the

new rule, for caused an explosion, at-

with passengers loss of life.

Schalek was

Some of the cars summe

turn over and their abilities tested, and he

sealers are requested to select a site for

they become so tight. His choice fell on

the knees of persons he was superintend-

that it is almost im-

possible to get in or out of the

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February 17, 1903.

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